2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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shield the wrong-doers, but even to aid in the perpetration (Grigg, 1880, 411; Francis, 1908, 295).

The power and influence of the *manegar* was vastly greater in the last century than it now is: '... when he visited any village within his jurisdiction, the monegar had the privilege of having the best women or maids of the place to share his cot according to his choice'.[14] Girls were only one kind of bribe that might secretly be used to secure his sympathies: clothes and feasting were much commoner. The autocracy of these local officials is well illustrated by 'stories ... of a Monegar of one village who ordered an individual who had disobeyed his orders to be covered with a slab of stone' (Natesa Sastri, 1892, 831-832).

Just as alien as the British notion of a headman's role was the idea of electing a council; and yet a supposedly elected *panchayat*[15] became the official organ of local government shortly after the First World War. (Its duties today are to provide certain facilities, notably the up-keep of roads and paths, water supply, community radio, maintenance of land records and birth and death registers, and the supply of information about governmental activity.) Despite the appearance of village *panchayats* and of a state police force in some villages, the organization of celebrations and the settlement of disputes have remained very much in the hands of the traditional headman, his festival committee and his council. Criminal cases should be reported to the police and are usually handled in a lawcourt, but civil and petty criminal cases can either be settled by the village council or by an official *panchayat* court.[16]

This multiplicity of procedures exposes the Badagas to three different legal systems: their own indigenous one, still influential in establishing precedents; the present-day Badaga village council which settles disputes according to a majority opinion (an opinion voiced, however, by the headman and modified by the knowledge that the case may then be taken, together with the decision, before a court of law); and finally the increasingly popular hierarchy of government law courts.

THE PRESENT AMBILEGAL SITUATION

With such a confusion of courts, officials, regulations and legal options, how does a Badaga choose which medium to use? The prime consideration is apparently not the seriousness of the

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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could not have been uttered during the prayer under the tree. If on the other hand the therapist has two patients needing this cure at the same time he can put down the first coin on a leaf, pray for one man, cut some bark for him, and then repeat the process for the second patient.

When the therapist goes to get the bark he takes along another man from the patient's hamlet. The family of the patient bear the expenses of both men. This second person comes to help, in case the therapist is attacked by a tiger, or injures himself, or gets caught by the forest guards—for this tree will be in a Government Reserve Forest. The therapist has to collect 90 plants for the medicine; but he must get the bark before the other 89 ingredients. (A botanist has noted that the bark yields an astringent gum-resin that is 75 per cent tannic acid; Gamble 1922:261). Among the items that are apparently considered necessary are Jamaican switch sorrel leaves, blue-gum leaves, rue leaves, Bermuda grass, cockspur flower, cumin, *hulla majjige*, and some cowdung. Another important thing to collect is some strips of fresh bark from the Indian willow tree. These he will go on collecting until evening, either around Burliya:r or on the way back to the hamlet. The medicine for Big Wind really consists of some 40 specific plants (the identities of which I have not discovered); but altogether 90 plants must be used in it, the remaining 50 being of any varieties available. On the first day of the treatment the therapist may not bring all 90 plants, yet he can still make the medicine with what he already has and use it. On the second day he can add more plants to the same medicine and re-use it. On the third day he must be sure to have all 90 plants in the medicine. This mixture has been boiled though, and it can only be kept for three days. If the treatment goes on for longer than that, then fresh medicine has to be mixed, using more of the bark that was originally brought

177 Until the end of the last century Badagas sedulously avoided the British
178 legal system and its officers. The traditional Badaga system, which we described
earlier (pp. 29-43), continued to operate effectively. In the following chapter we
121 shall describe the social change which came about during the present century when
Badagas were obliged to adapt their legal system so as to make use of the official
Indian one too.

657 Local government under the British was in practice confined for the most
(631) part to the municipalities. Some police stations were established in rural areas,
(625) and local roads were constructed; but in general there was little attempt to im-
(871) prove the lot of the Badagas. In a few villages the presence of free mission
schools from 1857 onward nevertheless did much to raise the standard of educa-
tion (cf. Grigg 1880: 423-26).

After Independence, on the other hand, the Indian government began to pay a great deal of attention to developing the rural sector of the country. The Nilgiris was not selected for inclusion in the areas subjected to intensive community development in the early 1950's, but local panchayat offices were set up in the administrative "villages" of the Nilgiris, and began the dissemination of information and the improvement of basic services. The Badagas were classified as a "Backward Class" and received special help in these matters from the Harijan
(312) Welfare Department. Today most villages, as a result of these efforts, have a
(491) fairly hygienic supply of running tap-water, a track connecting them with the main
(365) roads, and an electricity supply. Many villages have started their own coopera-
(474) tive society, through which they get loans and agricultural supplies against the security of their lands or houses.

177 Certain pieces of legislation often regarded as milestones in the recent

632 In the earliest days of the British régime it was enough for the managar to be a man of the gentry respected by the Badagas (Grigg 1880: 336). In addition to him, (111) the British appointed a Badaga as accountant or karnam to keep records. Both of these roles -- held by Badagas appointed by and responsible to an outside authority -- were new to Nilgiri society. So was the idea of electing a council; but a supposedly elected panchayat (the India-wide term for a village council) became the official instrument of local government shortly after the First World War. Its functions today are to provide various facilities, notably the up-keep of roads and paths, water supply, community radio, the maintenance of land records and birth and death registers, and the supplying of information about various aspects of government activity.

The roles of the two key positions in a government panchayat are officially stated to entail the following:

> The head of the village [i.e. managar] is the representative of Government in the village. He is the village magistrate and head of the village police. He is the collector of the revenue of the village over which he presides, and has also to perform [miscellaneous small] duties...
>
> The karnam, who is entrusted with the keeping of village accounts, is subordinate to the head of the village. He should help and advise the head of the village in every way. He is the clerk of the head of the village in his capacity of village munsif [i.e. managar] and Magistrate. He has to prepare reports, accounts, statements, etc., which it is necessary to put in writing... (Madras 1958: 1)

Despite the setting-up of village panchayats and the appearance of a 632 692 state police force in some Nilgiri villages, the organization of celebrations and • 625 the settlement of disputes have remained very much in the hands of the traditional headman, his festival committee, and his council. Criminal cases must be reported to the police and are usually handled in a court of law, but civil and petty criminal cases can either be settled by the Badaga council or can go before 671 an official panchayat court. (The distinction between civil and criminal cases is